



Rethinking migration

Work and welfare in a mobile economy

12 December, 2008

Arundel House, 13-15 Arundel St, Temple Place, London, WC2R 3DX

Agenda

8.30-9.00

Registration

9.00-9.30

Politics and public opinion: building a progressive narrative on migration

Over recent years, opinion polls have shown growing public resistance to immigration throughout Europe – a trend which many fear will intensify under a worsening economic climate. The force of public opinion, in which migration and economic insecurities are often inextricably linked, has made it difficult for political parties to lead, rather than follow, on this issue. Indeed, it is often a criticism of the centre-left that they have failed to define an ideologically coherent approach to immigration, allowing more reactionary voices – of both the left and the right – to dominate. But what would a progressive narrative on migration look like? How realistic is it to think that a progressive political consensus on migration can be achieved in times of economic uncertainty?

Keynote Speaker:

Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP, minister for employment relations at the department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

9.30-10.30

Responses and Discussion:

Sophie Barrett-Brown, partner and head of the UK practice of Laura Devine Solicitors and chair of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association

Paul Statham, professor of political sociology at the University of Bristol and director of the centre for European political communications

David Goodhart, editor of Prospect magazine

10.30-11.00

Refreshment break

11.00-12.30

Session two: Welfare states, labour markets and migration: towards a new policy agenda

As the global economic downturn worsens, various European governments are responding to the prospect of increasing unemployment by reducing, or promising to reduce, levels of inward migration. Research evidence suggests, however, that the number and type of migrants who cross our borders, and the type of contributions they make, are not only the result of specific immigration policies. They are also influenced by Europe's diverse labour market structures and welfare systems. This does not mean that states should abandon efforts to select migrants, but rather that immigration, labour market and welfare policies need to be developed in tandem. This session will examine the way European domestic political economies interact with migration patterns. How can labour market, welfare and immigration reforms be better integrated?

Speakers:

Paolo Reboani, head of the strategic unit at the department for Labour, Health and Social Policies of the Italian government

Christian Dustmann, professor of economics and director of the centre for research and analysis on migration at the University College London

Grete Brochmann, professor of sociology at the University of Oslo, Norway

Jakob von Weizsäcker, resident scholar at BRUEGEL and former economist at the World Bank

12.30-13.15

Keynote address: The migration reality: a new lens for understanding 21st century challenges

Debates about labour migration in Europe are to a large extent hampered by a historical mindset, a tendency to see migration as a distinct and separate phenomenon that 'happens' to our societies. In an age of high population mobility, a new lens is needed for thinking about the economic prosperity and welfare of our societies, one which accepts migration as integral to Europe's 21st century reality.

Speaker:

Trevor Phillips, chair of the equality and human rights commission

13.15-14.00

Lunch and close



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